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HOW SETTING BOUNDARIES CAN ALSO SET YOU FREE

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Malorie Mackey is an actress, host, and writer living in Los Angeles, CA. Malorie's first book was published in 2017 and her short story "What Love Has Taught Me" has been published in the anthology "Choices." You can find Malorie's travel content on dozens of digital media platforms. Check out www.maloriesadventures.com for more. Malorie's adventures don't just encompass physical adventures. She has been a student of intuition since she was a teenager, studying at Edgar Cayce's A.R.E. In 2019, Malorie discovered the Monroe Institute while filming her travel show. Since then, she has been studying the art and science of consciousness through many different programs and life experiences.

This may be a taboo topic to talk about, but I consider it important to bring up topics that may make us uncomfortable but have the potential to help empower those who need it most. I want to talk about cutting toxicity out of your life, and this includes toxic people, including those who may be mentally or emotionally abusive to you. I'm specifically referring to people who do not respect your boundaries. Every person in your life, no matter who they are, should be respectful to the boundaries you set for yourself. This includes your parents, lovers, and friends. When people begin to question, doubt, or even harass you about your boundaries, it's important to note that they do not have your best interests in mind, and this can become a worsening problem very quickly, depending upon your relationship with that person. I, myself, have had quite the adventure with this recently.

When I was growing up, I was taught by those around me that I didn't need boundaries. They were never respected, and this became a problem in many of my adult relationships. I was hesitant to place boundaries and when I did, I would make them too flexible, which allowed others to trample on them. One day I woke up and realized how important these boundaries were to my mental health. But by setting them, I knew that some of the people closest to me would never respect them, and it became a much larger and more painful conversation than I would have liked. It unfortunately ended **with the loss** of some of my closest personal relationships. On the other hand, I can't tell you how many people stepped up and proved they were true friends.

I could also see this pattern repeating in my sister. The other day, a friend asked her to meet up in an hour at a nearby bar. Given only an hour's notice, my sister told her friend she already had plans. Rather than respecting this, her friend proceeded to harass her for hours about how she wasn't a good friend and put pressure on her to come anyway and cancel the plans she already had. This weighed on my sister as she actually considered cancelling her plans to appease her friend. This is a clear example of not respecting the boundary my sister set forth, and it's not healthy for either person involved in the exchange.

If you'd like to set healthy boundaries for yourself and you're finally ready to really put yourself first, I can encourage you to start small and meditate on what this may mean for you. First, you can meditate on finding hobbies, activities, or any small things that come to mind that may make your life happier. What do you love most in your life? How can you expand upon that and allow more of it into your experience? What makes you unhappy? How can you set boundaries that can keep this unhappiness to a minimum? Maybe you see the people who stress you out a little less often? Maybe you put a time limit on the things you have to do that make you unhappy? Setting your boundaries can help you to structure your life in a way that makes you happiest and gives you the space you need for yourself. It's okay to ask for space from anyone and everyone when you need it.

Unfortunately, if you have controlling people around you, you may quickly see them retaliate against, complain about, or even attack the boundaries you've established (such as my sister's friend did above). When this happens, it's important to note that it's not you; you can and should set boundaries. It's the other people's issues if they have problems with the boundaries you've set. Try speaking with them about it if you feel comfortable. If it continues to be a problem, perhaps find a meditation to connect with your guidance on how to let that relationship proceed.

I've spent a lot of my adult life learning **my own value** and trying to understand that respecting my own boundaries and wishes is something that is absolutely healthy and acceptable. If you didn't grow up in an environment where this was respected, it can be hard to learn that lesson, but it's been necessary for me as I continue on. Please note, I'm not saying that you should just start abruptly making changes or cutting people out of your life, but I do think it's important to meditate on your circumstances frequently, and that should include noting the boundaries you've set—and even setting more if you feel you should. It can become one of the most freeing things for you when you realize that you are in control of your own life and happiness, and I truly hope that you find and embrace this often!